



Maricopa County Animal Care & Control



Hot Weather Tips

***This information can help you care for your companion animal
when the mercury rises.***

- NEVER leave your pet in a parked car. An animal's body temperature can rise in just seconds causing heat related problems. Normal body temperature for dogs and cats is 101-103 degrees.
- Overheating (heat prostration) can kill an animal. Never leave an animal alone in a vehicle, since even with the windows open, your vehicle can quickly become a furnace. Parking in shade offers little protection, as the sun shifts during the day. When traveling, carry a gallon thermos filled with fresh, cold water.
- Walk your pet on cooler surfaces to protect his feet from burning. If you can't hold your hand long on the surface, it's probably too hot for your pet as well.
- Don't force your animal to exercise after a meal in hot weather. Always exercise him in the cool of the early morning or evening.
- Keep walks to a minimum. He is much closer to the hot asphalt and his body can heat up quickly.
- Always provide plenty of adequate shade for an animal staying outside the house at all times during the day. A properly constructed dog house serves best.
- Please be sensitive to old and overweight animals in hot weather. Snub-nosed dogs especially (bulldogs, Pekingese, Boston terriers, Lhasa Apsos and Shih Tzus) and those with heart or lung disease should be kept indoors in air-conditioning as much as possible. These animals have a difficult time regulating their body temperature.
- Keep a current license and identification tag on your dog or cat and consider microchipping as a means of permanent identification.
- Be alert for coolant leaking from your vehicle. Animals are attracted to the sweet taste of coolant and ingesting just a small amount can cause an animal's death. Consider using animal-friendly products that use propylene glycol rather than those containing ethylene glycol.
- A clean coat can help to prevent summer skin problems, so keep your dog or cat well groomed. Consult with your groomer or veterinarian to determine whether your pet would be more comfortable with a shorter haircut for the summer. If he has a heavy coat, shaving your dog's hair to a 1-inch length will help prevent overheating. Don't shave a dog's hair down to the skin; this robs him of protection from the sun. A cat should be brushed frequently to keep his coat tangle-free.
- If your pet shows signs of heat distress, cool him down slowly with a cool rag. Do not submerge him in water. Take your dog immediately to a veterinarian for follow up care.
- Take your companion animal to the veterinarian for a spring or early summer checkup, including a test for heartworm. Have the doctor recommend a safe, effective flea and tick control program.
- Provide fresh water every day in a tip-proof container.

For more information on animal care, behavior, or AC&C programs,
contact (602) 506-PETS, or visit pets.maricopa.gov.